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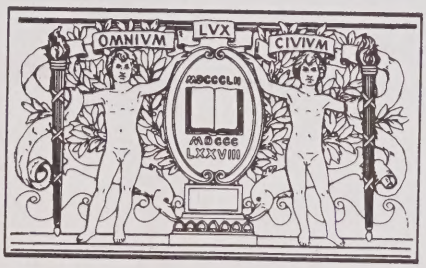

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A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF DOWNTOWN BOSTON IN 1980

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October 1985

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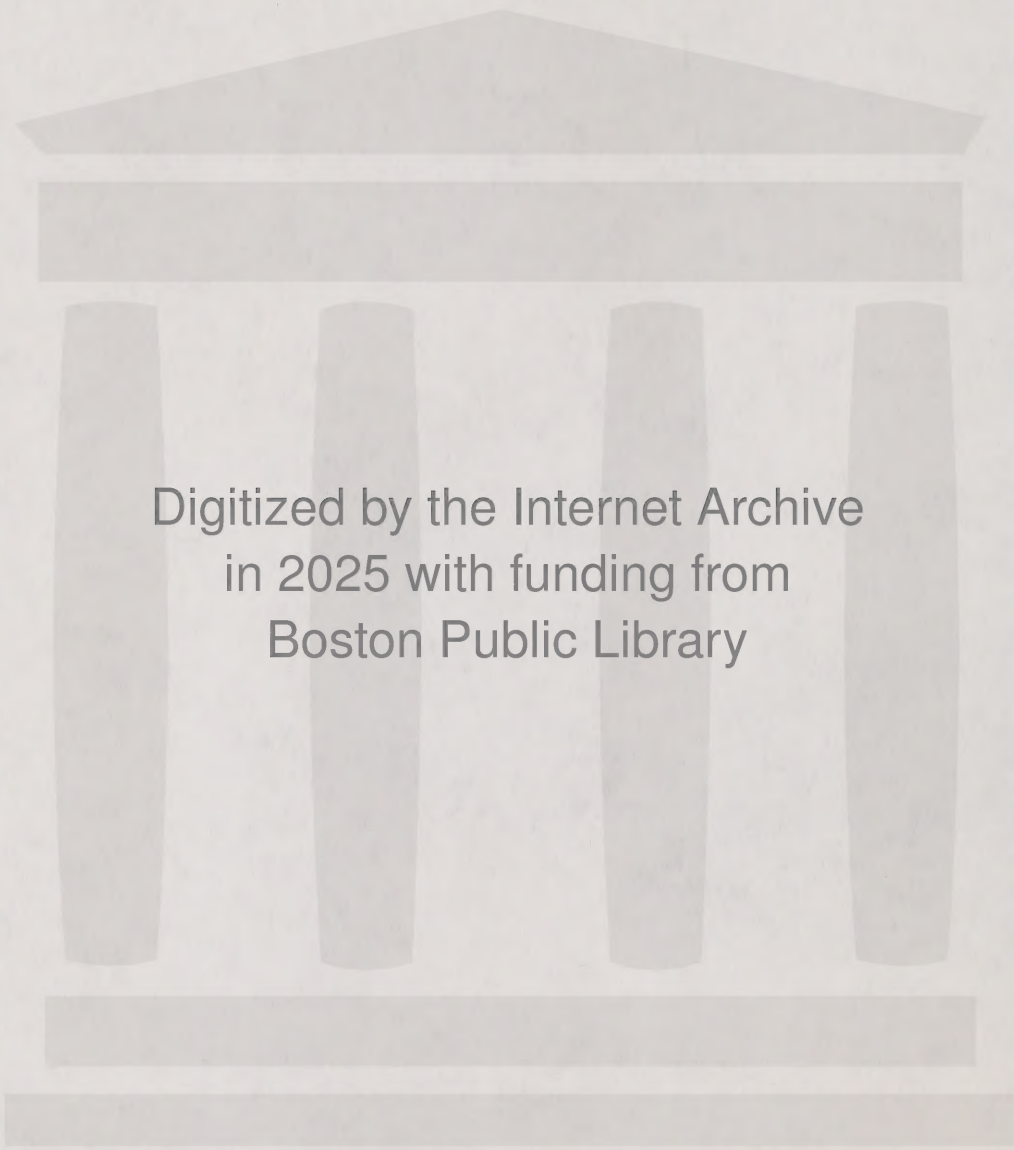
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DOWNTOWN BOSTON

For the purposes of this report, downtown Boston is defined as the area including the Back Bay and Beacon Hill, Chinatown and the Central district (which incorporates the financial district and the former West End). The boundaries have been drawn to correspond with the Neighborhood Statistical Areas (numbers 4, 7 and 21) but, because of historical incomparability, the trend analysis for 1970 and 1980 is based on census tract geography.

Since the neighborhoods are distinct one from another, they will be discussed in a comparative fashion. First, however, the changes that occurred downtown during the 1970s will be outlined.

The population of downtown increased by 13 percent during the decade (from 35,564 to 40,220), and its racial composition shifted: in 1970, 91 percent of downtown residents were white and 4 percent were black. By 1980, 84 percent of inhabitants in this area were white and 5 percent were black. Part of this change may stem from the different ethnic identification categories in use in the 1970 and 1980 Censuses.

Young children accounted for 4 percent of the downtown residents in 1970 and 3 percent of them in 1980, while teenagers dropped from 11 percent of the total to 8 percent during those ten years. Adults aged 20-24 years also dropped as a proportion of the total (from 24% to 18%), perhaps in part because the cost of housing was beyond the reach of college students and recent graduates who wanted to live or work downtown.

The aging trend in downtown is further illustrated by the fact that whereas 20 percent of downtown residents belonged in the 25-34 year cohort in 1970, 31 percent did so in 1980. The group aged 35 to 44 also

grew (from 9% to 12%), while the 45-54 year-old cohort maintained its 8 percent share of the total. Older groups shrank proportionally over the decade: those aged 55-64 from 10 percent to 7 percent and 65-74 year-olds from 8 percent to 6 percent. The very elderly (75 years plus) held constant as 5 percent of the population. The median age of downtown residents shifted slightly from 30.6 years in 1970 to 31.4 years in 1980.

Of the 19,987 households living downtown in 1970, one-quarter were families, of which 23 percent included children less than 18 years of age. Four-fifths of downtown families at that time were married couples and 15 percent were headed by single women. Twenty-four percent of the couples and 22 percent of the women supported dependent children.

By 1980, the number of households had risen 11 percent to 22,024 (although the number of persons per household remained constant at 1.78). Nearly a quarter (24%) of these households were families, with 27 percent including young children. Again, 80 percent of downtown families were couples, 27 percent of whom had children under 18. The share of single mothers dropped to 13 percent of the total number of families downtown, but 32 percent of those women supported children younger than 18.

Participation in the labor force among downtown residents inched up one percentage point during the 1970s, from 68.8 percent to 69.8 percent. The proportion of inhabitants working in construction dropped from just under 2 percent in 1970 to less than 1 percent in 1980. Manufacturing maintained its 10 percent share of civilian workers, and trade also held on to 16 percent of downtown workers in both censuses.

Professional services employed 37 percent of downtown residents in 1980, up one percentage point from 1970.

The housing stock increased by 11 percent over the decade, and vacancies decreased from 9 percent to 8 percent. Regarding tenure, fewer than 7 percent of occupied units downtown were owner-occupied in 1970, compared to 15 percent in 1980. Most owner-occupants in 1970 were white (91%), a characteristic which intensified over the decade (95% were white in 1980). Blacks accounted for 4 percent of home-owners in the downtown in 1970 but for only 2 percent of them by 1980. Ninety-three percent of tenants in this area in 1970 were white and 4 percent were black, as opposed to 1980, when 87 percent were white and 5 percent were black.

Back Bay-Beacon Hill is by far the largest of the three areas that make up the downtown. In 1980, 30,212 people lived in that neighborhood, compared to 6,257 in the Central district and 4,746 in Chinatown. Whites accounted for 92 percent, 86 percent and 31 percent, respectively, of the inhabitants in the subareas. Four percent of Back Bay-Beacon Hill and of Chinatown residents were black in 1980, compared to 5 percent in the Central district. Of the three neighborhoods, only Chinatown boasted a sizable Asian population (64%). Hispanics made up 3 percent (in Back Bay-Beacon Hill) or less of the total in this district.

Age

Back Bay-Beacon Hill and Central had few children in 1980: only 4 percent of Central residents and 2 percent of Back Bay-Beacon Hill residents were under 10 years of age at the time of the Census. Another

4 percent in Central and 9 percent in Back Bay-Beacon Hill were adolescents. Within the downtown neighborhoods, the largest proportions of children and teenagers could be found in Chinatown, where 10 percent of the population was under 10 and 13 percent was between 10 and 20. The Back Bay and Beacon Hill contained the largest population in its twenties among the downtown areas: 22 percent were aged 20-24 years and 33 percent were 25-34 years-old. In Chinatown, those figures were 13 percent and 20 percent, respectively, and in Central, 9 percent and 28 percent, respectively. Adults in early middle-age accounted for roughly equal shares of the neighborhood totals: 12 percent, 13 percent and 14 percent, respectively. Many of the inhabitants of the Central district were middle-aged and elderly--11 percent belong in the 45-54 year cohort, in the 55-64 year cohort, and in the 65-74 year cohort, each. Another 7 percent were aged 75 or more. In Chinatown, these four cohorts contained 10 percent, 9 percent, 8 percent and 5 percent, respectively, of the neighborhood population. For Beacon Hill and the Back Bay, the relevant figures were 7 percent, 6 percent, 5 percent and 4 percent.

Household Composition

Only one-fifth of the households in Back Bay-Beacon Hill in 1980 were families, compared to 28 percent in the Central district and 51 percent in Chinatown. The Back Bay and Beacon Hill had high proportions of students and of young managerial employees, and the Central district also housed many people who had not yet formed family units. In all three of these neighborhoods, men headed a larger proportion of the non-family households than did women, although those shares were only

one percentage point apart in the Back Bay and Beacon Hill. Single individuals accounted for nearly two-thirds of the households in Back Bay-Beacon Hill and Central (63% and 61%, respectively), compared to 39 percent in Chinatown, and two-person households made up 29 percent of the total in the former two areas compared to 24 percent in Chinatown. Households in Chinatown tended to be large in 1980--e.g., 14 percent consisted of five persons or more. Only 1 percent of the households in either the Central district or Back Bay-Beacon Hill were so large.

Residential Stability

In 1980, Chinatown was the only neighborhood of the three being discussed where residents had some long-term status: 53 percent had lived at their 1980 addresses for at least five years. Only 30 percent of Central residents had had the same residence for that length of time, as had 26 percent of people in Back Bay-Beacon Hill.

These general figures for 1980 break down as follows: in the Back Bay-Beacon Hill, two-thirds of owners were recent inmigrants (1975 or later) and another 14 percent had occupied their dwellings since 1970-1974. Only 9 percent had lived at the same address for over twenty years. Four-fifths (79%) of renters in the neighborhood had moved in after 1974 and 11 percent had occupied the same unit for five to ten years. Chinatown owners also tended to be short-term residents, in the sense that 45 percent had lived in the same dwelling for less than five years, and another 18 percent had been in residence for no more than ten years. Eighty-nine percent of the tenants in Chinatown had been at their 1980 addresses for ten years or less. The same held true for 89 percent of Central tenants--except that in the Central district 82

percent of these people had moved into their apartments in 1975 or later (vs. 58% in Chinatown). All of the owner-occupants in Central moved into their homes after 1969.

Education

Eighty-nine percent of school-enrollees in Back Bay-Beacon Hill attended college in 1980. Six percent were enrolled in elementary school and the remainder were in secondary school. No group predominated to such an extent in either of the other two districts. In Chinatown, 4 percent of the residents who were students attended nursery school, 43 percent were in elementary school, 20 percent attended high school and 34 percent were enrolled in college. The appropriate numbers within the Central district were 4 percent, 10 percent, 10 percent and 75 percent, respectively.

Ninety-four percent of adults living in Back Bay-Beacon Hill in 1980 had graduated from high school, and 62 percent of them had also earned college degrees. In the Central area, 87 percent of adults held high school diplomas at the time of the Census and 48 percent were also college graduates. The level of educational attainment in Chinatown was much lower than in the above-mentioned neighborhoods, partly because of the presence of recent immigrants who had not had the opportunity to further their education. In Chinatown, 47 percent of adults had completed secondary school (well below the city average of 68 percent) and 19 percent held college degrees (compared to 20% citywide).

Employment

Of the three districts that comprise the downtown, Back Bay-Beacon Hill had the highest labor force participation rate in 1980--71 percent versus 67 percent in Central and 65 percent in Chinatown. Both Central and Back Bay-Beacon Hill residents demonstrated low unemployment (less than 4%), compared to the city average of 6 percent. Just over 5 percent of civilian workers in Chinatown were unemployed in 1980.

Fifty-eight percent of Central workers filled managerial/professional level jobs, as did 52 percent of those living in the Back Bay and Beacon Hill, but only 26 percent of Chinatown residents. The technical/sales/administrative category revealed less of a spread among the different neighborhoods: 31 percent of Back Bay-Beacon Hill workers, 28 percent of Central workers and 21 percent of Chinatown workers held such jobs in 1980. The proportion of people employed in the services sector reached 30 percent in Chinatown--far higher than the 11 percent and 8 percent registered in Back Bay-Beacon Hill and Central, respectively. Almost one-quarter of Chinatown workers were employed in either crafts or labor in 1980, compared to 5 percent in Central and 6 percent in Back Bay-Beacon Hill.

As regards industry, one-fifth of Chinatown residents worked in manufacturing (vs. 10% each in Back Bay-Beacon Hill and Central) and 37 percent were in trade (vs. 14% in Back Bay-Beacon Hill and 16% in Central). Finance, insurance and real estate were large employment sectors in both Back Bay-Beacon Hill and Central--12 percent and 13 percent, respectively. Thirty-nine percent of workers living in the Back Bay and Beacon Hill (and nearly 39% in Central) held positions in

one of the professional services, compared to slightly under 20 percent in Chinatown. Public administration accounted for 8 percent of the Central economy.

Income

Eleven percent of families living in the Back Bay and Beacon Hill earned less than $10,000 in 1979, as did 18 percent of families in the Central district and nearly 42 percent of those in Chinatown. Seventeen percent of families in Chinatown had incomes of between $10,000 and $15,000, and another 28 percent earned up to $25,000. Fewer than 8 percent of the families in Back Bay-Beacon Hill and the Central district belong in the $10,000-$15,000 income bracket. Eighteen percent of Back Bay-Beacon Hill families and 15 percent of Central families earned between $15,000 and $25,000 annually. Residents of the Central district showed the second highest earnings of the three areas: 43 percent fell into the $25,000-$50,000 bracket, and almost 16 percent belonged in the highest category. A third of families in Back Bay-Beacon Hill had annual earnings of $25,000-$50,000 and 30 percent earned in excess of $50,000. Median family incomes varied widely, from $32,666 in Back Bay-Beacon Hill to $29,680 in Central to $12,369 in Chinatown.

Unrelated individuals in all three downtown districts fared worse than families in 1980. In Back Bay-Beacon Hill, where large numbers of students lived, 37 percent of unrelated individuals earned less than $5,000 annually, and another 19 percent had incomes of between $5,000 and $10,000. For Chinatown residents, those figures rose to 44 percent and 28 percent, respectively, and dropped to 23 percent and 16 percent, respectively, in Central. Similar shares of the population of unrelated

individuals in each district had yearly incomes of $10,000-$15,000 (16% in Back Bay-Beacon Hill, 13% in Chinatown and 17% in Central). Unrelated individuals living in Central showed a higher earning power than did Back Bay-Beacon Hill residents--27 percent of the former earned $15,000-$25,000/year, 13 percent had incomes of $25,000-$50,000, and 4 percent belonged in the highest income category. In Back Bay-Beacon Hill, where a smaller proportion of people are employed full-time, only 2 percent of unrelated individuals had annual incomes of $50,000 or more. The median income for unrelated individuals downtown ranged from $5,843 (which was lower than the 1980 citywide average) in Chinatown to $8,228 in Back Bay-Beacon Hill and $12,954 in Central.

Poverty Status

Twelve percent of families with children in Back Bay-Beacon Hill lived in poverty at the time of the last Census compared to only 5 percent of those in the Central district. In all, only one-quarter of the families living in Back Bay-Beacon Hill and in Central in 1980 included children, as against half of the families in Chinatown. In the latter neighborhood, a quarter of families with dependent children fell below the poverty line.

Thirteen percent of the families living in Back Bay-Beacon Hill in 1980 were headed by single women, 41 percent of whom supported children younger than 18. Eighteen percent of these female family-householders fell below poverty level in 1980, and 35 percent of single mothers with dependent children did so. In the Central district, 16 percent of all families were headed by single women, one-third of which included young children. None of the female family-householders living in the Central

district were in poverty in 1980. Chinatown had the smallest proportion of female-headed families in the downtown (9%), as well as the highest share of such families with dependent children (53%). Twenty-nine percent of families headed by women in Chinatown fell below the poverty line in 1980, and 15 percent of said families included children under 18.

Fourteen percent of elderly inhabitants in Back Bay-Beacon Hill lived below the poverty level in 1980, as did 19 percent of the aged in Central and 39 percent of those in Chinatown. Overall, 17 percent of people living in Back Bay-Beacon Hill, 23 percent of those in Chinatown, and 12 percent of Central residents fell below the poverty line in 1980. Thirty percent of Chinatown's poor were less than 18 years old and 28 percent were aged. In the Back Bay and Beacon Hill, 13 percent of the poor were children and 10 percent were over 65 years of age. Children accounted for 6 percent of the poor in the Central district and the elderly made up another 18 percent of that population. A quarter of Central district residents lived at or below 200 percent of the poverty level in 1980 compared to 32 percent in Back Bay-Beacon Hill and 58 percent in Chinatown.

Housing

Little of the housing inventory in any of the neighborhoods under discussion was owner-occupied in 1980 (1% in Central, 9% in Chinatown and 18% in Back Bay-Beacon Hill, where opportunities for home ownership--such as adequate incomes and a desirable stock--were more established). Virtually all (97%) of the owners in Back Bay-Beacon Hill were white, as were 80 percent of the homeowners in Central and 63

percent of them in Chinatown. Asians also comprised 16 percent of the owner-occupants in the Central district and 36 percent of them in Chinatown. Among renters, 93 percent in the Back Bay and Beacon Hill were white, compared to 89 percent in Central and 34 percent in Chinatown. Sixty-three percent of Chinatown tenants were Asian, as were 6 percent of the renters in Central.

Nine percent of the housing stock in Back Bay-Beacon Hill was vacant in 1980, as well as 10 percent of the inventory in Chinatown and 4 percent of it in Central. Slightly over half (53%) of the vacancies in Back Bay-Beacon Hill and Central were available to be rented, as were just under half of vacancies in Chinatown. Four percent of the vacant residential stock in each of the subareas was boarded up in 1980.

Size is another characteristic in which variations abounded from one district to another. Studios accounted for 18 percent of the dwellings in the Back Bay and Beacon Hill, 12 percent of those in Chinatown and almost a quarter (24%) of those in Central. One reason for the large proportion of small apartments in Central may be that much (73%) of the rental housing in the area was constructed after 1960. About one-fifth of the housing in Chinatown and Back Bay-Beacon Hill consisted of two rooms, compared to 26 percent in Central. Three-room units accounted for 26 percent, 30 percent and 35 percent of the residential stock in Back Bay-Beacon Hill, Central and Chinatown, respectively. In 1980, Chinatown possessed the highest share of large units: 32 percent of dwellings consisted of four rooms or more, compared to 29 percent in Back Bay-Beacon Hill and 21 percent in Central. Rents in Chinatown were also lower than elsewhere downtown. The 1980 median gross rent there was $221, versus $397 in Central and

$325 in Back Bay-Beacon Hill. Median values for single-family homes ranged from $65,000 in Central to $86,700 in Chinatown to $141,200 in Back Bay-Beacon Hill.

New owner-occupied units tended to be located in Back Bay-Beacon Hill: 18 of the 26 dwellings built between 1970 and 1980 were added to the stock in that neighborhood, as was all of the owner-occupied housing built during the 1960s. Still, 93 percent of the owner-occupied housing found in Back Bay-Beacon Hill in 1980 predated World War II (as did 90% of such housing in Chinatown).

Eighty-one percent of the rental housing in Back Bay-Beacon Hill was also constructed by 1940, but only 42 percent of the rentals in Chinatown, and 18 percent of those in Central were. In Chinatown, 44 percent of all rental units were built after 1969, as were 28 percent of such dwellings in Central. Close to half (45%) of the rental apartments in Central were built during the 1960s--no doubt primarily in the cleared West End.

Table 1

POPULATION OF DOWNTOWN BOSTON, 1980, BY CENSUS TRACT

	Total	105	106	107	108	(Partial-17%) 303	201	202	203	701	702	(31%) 703
Total Population	40,220	2,608	2,202	6,436	7,090	477	5,271	3,859	5,764	1,998	3,552	963
White	32,823	1,974	1,854	5,980	6,779	449	5,113	3,578	5,366	1,219	629	823
Black	1,799	509	225	223	114	23	66	118	261	98	167	44
Indian	65	12	4	9	9	1	3	7	4	8	5	1
Asian	4,011	66	91	126	110	1	68	104	78	630	2,712	85
Other	463	47	28	98	78	3	21	52	55	43	39	10
Hispanic	996	119	55	255	192	10	53	109	122	45	38	18

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census Population Totals for Racial and Spanish Origin Groups."

Note: Tract 303 lies partly in downtown and partly in the North End and along the Waterfront, so only those census blocks within the downtown are counted here. Tract 703 also straddles the downtown line and, again, only the relevant census blocks have been included.

Tracts 105-108 form the Back Bay, tracts 201-203 represent Beacon Hill and the West End, and 303 and 701-703 make up downtown *per se*.

Table 2

POPULATION DATA FOR DOWNTOWN BOSTON, 1980

	Downtown	Back Bay-Beacon Hill	Chinatown	Central
Total population	41,215	30,212	4,746	6,257
White	34,708	27,864	1,447	5,397
Black	1,800	1,284	207	309
Asian	4,142	655	3,034	453
Indian	64	49	6	9
Other	556	409	58	89
Hispanic	1,133	937	59	137
0-9 years	1,373	659	479	235
10-19	3,678	2,828	608	242
20-24	7,881	6,678	615	588
25-34	12,645	9,927	942	1,776
35-44	4,935	3,462	597	876
45-54	3,319	2,146	484	689
55-64	2,957	1,819	417	721
65+	4,427	2,693	604	1,130
Median age	31.1	29.2	31.8	38.3
# households	21,741	16,547	1,589	3,605
family	5,166	3,356	813	997
nonfamily-male head	8,534	6,689	483	1,362
nonfamily-female head	8,041	6,502	293	1,246
1 person/household	13,190	10,378	614	2,198
2 persons/household	6,233	4,802	381	1,050
3 persons/household	1,324	890	196	238
4 persons/household	572	306	175	91
5 persons/household	422	171	223	28
% high school graduates	85.4	93.8	46.5	87.3
% college graduates	54.6	61.8	18.5	47.9

Source: Boston Population and Housing by Neighborhood Areas, 1980. Demographic Information from the U.S. Bureau of the Census Neighborhood Areas.

Table 3

LABOR FORCE DATA FOR DOWNTOWN BOSTON, 1980

	Downtown	Back Bay-Beacon Hill	Chinatown	Central
# 16 years & over	39,187	29,361	4,049	5,777
# in labor force	27,262	20,771	2,637	3,854
% in labor force	69.6	70.7	65.1	66.7
# employed	26,030	19,998	2,326	3,706
Managerial/professional	13,172	10,449	593	2,130
Technical, sales, administrative	7,776	6,250	479	1,047
Services	3,277	2,269	705	303
Crafts/labor	1,763	996	541	226
Agricultural, forestry, fishing	94	62	25	7
Construction	471	345	27	99
Manufacturing	2,859	2,014	480	365
Transportation	679	561	24	94
Communication/utilities	472	401	39	32
Trade	4,148	2,717	857	574
Finance, real estate, insurance	3,069	2,448	136	485
Business	2,003	1,720	85	198
Professional services	9,729	7,834	457	1,438
Public administration	1,368	986	100	282
# families	5,281	3,409	875	997
0 workers	537	284	112	141
1 worker	1,503	955	243	305
2+ workers	3,241	2,170	520	551

Source: Boston Population and Housing by Neighborhood Areas, 1980. Demographic Information from the U.S. Bureau of the Census Neighborhood Areas.

Table 4

INCOME DATA FOR DOWNTOWN BOSTON, 1980

	Downtown	Back Bay-Beacon Hill	Chinatown	Central
# families	5,281	3,409	875	997
less than $5,000	329	161	110	58
$5,000-9,999	610	221	264	125
$10,000-14,999	484	259	146	79
$15,000-24,999	1,005	607	245	153
$25,000-34,999	824	566	45	213
$35,000-49,999	802	560	29	213
$50,000 and over	1,227	1,035	36	156
Median	$27,585	$32,666	$12,369	$29,680
# unrelated individuals	27,164	22,163	1,743	3,258
less than $5,000	9,706	8,190	767	749
$5,000-9,999	5,218	4,210	486	522
$10,000-14,999	4,343	3,559	228	556
$15,000-24,999	5,055	3,996	169	890
$25,000-49,999	2,243	1,739	76	428
$50,000 and over	599	469	17	113
Median	$13,713	$8,228	$5,843	$12,954
All incomes				
# families	5,281	3,409	875	997
# families with children	1,542	854	441	247
# female householders	660	429	76	155
# female householders with children	266	175	40	51
# unrelated individuals	24,110	19,250	1,602	3,258
# 65 years and over	2,731	1,764	333	634
# persons	37,629	27,307	4,695	5,627
# under 18 years	2,281	1,097	892	292
# 65 years and over	4,124	2,525	658	941
In poverty				
# families	405	185	162	58
# families with children	223	102	108	13
# female householders	100	78	22	0
# female householders with children	68	62	6	0
# unrelated individuals	5,211	4,228	467	516
# 65 years and over	491	238	130	123
# persons	6,416	4,698	1,072	646
# under 18 years	421	139	264	18
# 65 years and over	611	260	184	167
% persons below poverty	17.1	17.2	22.8	11.5
% persons below 200% of poverty	33.8	31.6	58.0	24.5

Source: Boston Population and Housing by Neighborhood Areas, 1980. Demographic Information from the U.S. Bureau of the Census Neighborhood Areas.

Table 5

HOUSING DATA FOR DOWNTOWN BOSTON, 1980

	Downtown	Back Bay-Beacon Hill	Chinatown	Central
# year-round dwellings	23,698	18,192	1,760	3,746
# owner-occupied	3,146	2,966	135	45
% of total occupied	13.3	17.9	8.5	1.2
White	2,994	2,873	85	36
Black	43	40	1	2
Asian, Pacific Islander & Indian	101	45	49	7
Other	8	8	0	0
Hispanic	31	30	0	1
# renter-occupied	18,595	13,581	1,454	3,560
White	16,230	12,570	488	3,172
Black	773	609	33	131
Asian, Pacific Islander & Indian	1,390	261	914	215
Other	202	141	19	42
Hispanic	475	385	18	72
# vacant dwelling units	1,957	1,645	171	141
for sale	231	225	2	4
for rent	1,038	879	84	75
other/held for occasional use	688	541	85	62
boarded-up	80	67	7	6
# without full plumbing	820	616	135	69
1 room/unit	4,757	3,640	217	900
2 rooms/unit	8,854	3,873	377	964
3 rooms/unit	6,886	5,171	608	1,107
4 rooms/unit	3,875	2,956	343	576
5+ rooms/unit	3,166	2,752	215	199
Median value of 1-family house	$123,204	$141,000	$86,700	$65,000
Median contract rent	$312	$313	$220	$381
Median gross rent	$320	$325	$221	$397
Year built, owner-occupied units	3,156	2,992	152	12
1975-80	0	0	0	0
1970-74	26	18	8	0
1960-69	143	143	0	0
1950-59	28	21	0	7
1940-49	35	28	7	0
1939 or earlier	2,924	2,782	137	5
Year built, renter-occupied units	18,717	13,747	1,454	3,516
1975-80	1,325	355	228	742
1970-74	831	194	410	227
1960-69	2,488	862	35	1,591
1950-59	832	450	126	256
1940-49	835	713	43	79
1939 or earlier	12,406	11,173	612	621

Source: Boston Population and Housing by Neighborhood Areas, 1980. Demographic Information from the U.S. Bureau of the Census Neighborhood Areas.

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